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Senate

The Senate met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Lloyd John Ogilvie, offered the following prayer:

Dear Father, whose faithfulness is consistent, whose mercies are new every morning, and whose patience persists when we least deserve it, we praise You for bringing us through another week of work in this Senate. You have given the Senators strength and courage to battle for truth as they see it, deal with differences, and keep the bond of unity. This week has had times of conflict and contention and times of unity and oneness. Thank You for holding the Senators together with oneness as fellow patriots in spite of the wins and losses. The very nature of our system fosters party spirit and passionate debate, but You maintain the mutual esteem and trust required to continue to work together. Unseen but powerful Sovereign of all, we thank You for Your presence in this Chamber. Continue to grant us the virtue of humility that keeps us open to You and to one another. Through our Lord and Savior. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF THE ACTING MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The able acting majority leader, the senior Senator from New Mexico, is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, in behalf of the majority leader, I have the following statement.

This morning the Senate will immediately proceed to a stacked series of rollcall votes with respect to the VA-HUD appropriations bill. The first vote in the series will be a 15-minute vote with all succeeding votes in the series

being limited to 10 minutes each. Up to six rollcall votes can be expected. Hopefully, that series of votes will include passage of the VA-HUD appropriations bill.

Following disposition of that bill, the Senate is also expected to consider the legislative appropriations bill. However, any votes ordered with respect to the legislative branch appropriations bill will be postponed, to occur on Tuesday, July 21, the time to be determined by the two leaders.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. INHOFE). Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now resume consideration of S. 2168.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2168) making appropriations for the Department of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

The Senate resumed consideration of the bill.

Pending:

Wellstone/Murray/McCain amendment No. 3199, to restore veterans tobacco-related benefits as in effect before the enactment of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

Murkowski amendment No. 3200, to provide land allotments for certain Native Alaskan veterans.

Nickles amendment No. 3202, to provide for an increase in FHA single family maximum mortgage amounts and GNMA guaranty fee.

Burns amendment No. 3205, to provide for insurance and indemnification with respect

to the development of certain experimental aerospace vehicles.

Sessions amendment No. 3206, to increase funding for activities of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration concerning science and technology, aeronautics, space transportation, and technology by reducing funding for the AmeriCorps program.

AMENDMENT NO. 3199

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Wellstone amendment. There are 2 minutes of debate equally divided.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. WELLSTONE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, could we have order, please.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

The Senator from Minnesota.

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I offered this amendment on behalf of Senator MURRAY, Senator MCCAIN and myself. This amendment speaks to an injustice. This amendment would restore benefits to veterans for smoking-related diseases. We had a lot of smoke and mirrors, we did a lot of things in the budget resolution that we should not have done. We have never had an up-or-down vote.

What this amendment essentially says is we should not have used that offset for highways, taking benefits that go to veterans. It is that clear.

Mr. President, let me just be crystal clear. There have been a lot of OMB stories that I would question. I believe there will not be that much that will be required, but this funding ought to go to veterans. In fact, I would argue you will never get the \$17 billion for highways, and we will ultimately have to go to surplus anyway. I have heard my colleagues talk about the surplus that we are going to have. We can at

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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